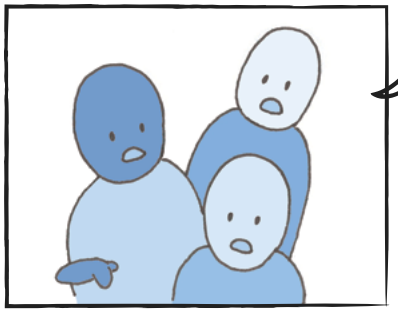
NOAA LEAGUE
Hiring Heroes

Issue No. 1
Free!

NOAA FISHERIES

Careers in science, service, and stewardship!

Everyone gets asked something like...



What are you going to be?

What are you going to do after high school?

What are you going to major in at college?

Maybe you have no idea...

Maybe you have a lot of ideas...

Forget that for a minute...

What do you **like**?
What **interests** you?
What are you **good at**?

Helping people

turn to page 10

Animals, plants, nature

turn to page 3

Leadership

turn to page 10

Money

turn to page 37

Science (chemistry, biology, other -ologies)

turn to page 9

Math, patterns, computers, modeling

turn to page 8

Protecting the environment

turn to page 5

Decision-making & law enforcement

turn to page 6

Being outside, water, ships, planes

turn to page 7

Being creative; design and media

turn to page 4

Do you like animals?

Rescue whales and seals and investigate their deaths like stranding specialist **Kristin Wilkinson** (turn to page 19)

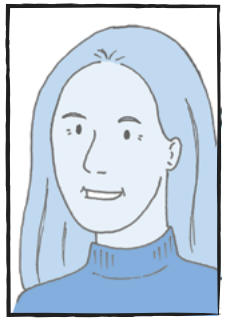
Protect marine mammals like marine biologist **Lynne Barre** (turn to page 25)

Protect fish by programming computers to model fish populations like fisheries biologist **Jason Cope** (turn to page 15)

Collect data on fish and endangered species on board fishing boats like fisheries observer **Christine Froschl** (turn to page 23)

Create videos of animals (and people and boats) like filmmaker **Paul Hillman** (turn to page 11)

Enforce marine conservation laws and investigate lawbreakers like special agent **Maile Schneider** (turn to page 13)



Study animals, things that affect them, and ways to protect them like research ecologist **Lisa Crozier** (turn to page 21)

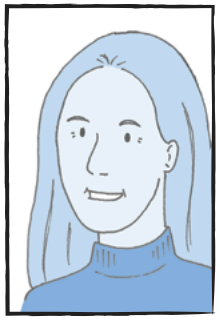
Do you like being creative?

Create videos of animals (and people and boats) like filmmaker **Paul Hillman** (turn to page 11)

Monitor computer networks and fix vulnerabilities like systems security officer **Mike McCully** (turn to page 27)

Protect fish by programming computers to model fish populations like fisheries biologist **Jason Cope** (turn to page 15)

Create new ways to identify toxins in marine animals using chemical analysis like research chemist **Denis da Silva** (turn to page 29)



Study animals, things that affect them, and ways to protect them like research ecologist **Lisa Crozier** (turn to page 21)

Research the impacts of pollution on animals and habitats in the US and around the world like lead research ecotoxicologist **Nat Scholz** (turn to page 31)

Interested in protecting the environment?

Rescue whales and seals and investigate their deaths like stranding specialist **Kristin Wilkinson**
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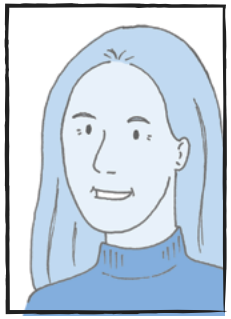

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Interested in law enforcement?

Enforce food safety laws like **Whitney Moore**
(turn to page 33)

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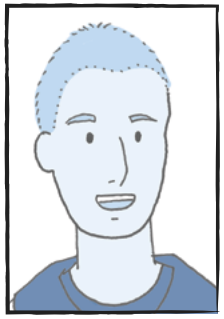
Do you like boats or being outdoors?



Make NOAA research possible as a ship captain (or plane pilot) like NOAA Corps officer **Justin Keesee** (turn to page 17)

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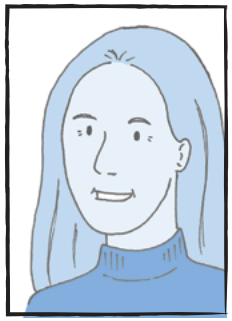
Interested in math or computers?



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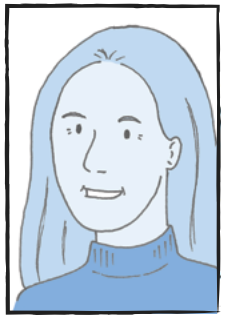

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Do you like helping people?

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Paul Hillman, filmmaker

My job is to make **videos** about NOAA. I do everything - scriptwriting, shooting, editing, and distribution (like uploading to YouTube).

Video is so important to **communicate** your message. I help NOAA communicate with the public about the research and work we do. And I really enjoy telling **stories**, so it's the perfect fit!

On location, I spend the day **filming** lab research, commercial fishing operations, interviews with scientists, etc. I love following scientists into the **field** to film their research.

In my **office**, I process and organize video that I've recorded. I also have to take care of the equipment and research video topics, write scripts, and edit videos.

I get to **travel** around working with many different people to tell many different stories.

I learn something **new** from every video I work on, and sometimes I get to see a new part of the country too!

And back in my office, working on the "movie magic" in post production is really **satisfying**.

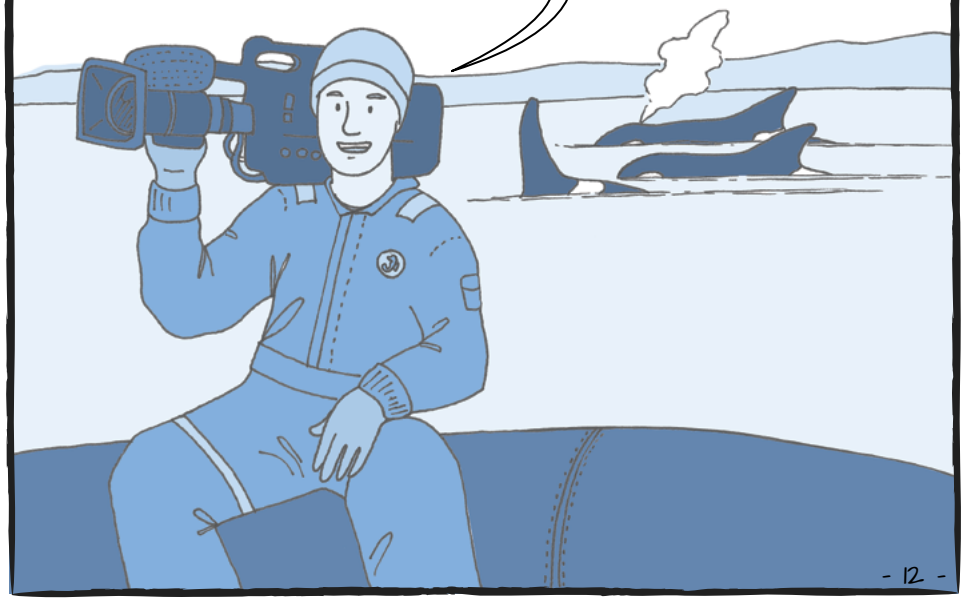
I've always had a strong interest in **photography** and **filmmaking**. After getting a bachelor's degree in biology, I thought I'd study animal behavior.

But when I explored options, I realized that I wanted to tell a wide **variety** of **stories** about animals and science. So instead of becoming a researcher, I get to dive into stories about whales, seals, fish, science, and our understanding of the natural world.

The best way to get into this field is to **volunteer** and **intern**. In my early 20s I volunteered on a couple film crews. The first was filming a documentary in Botswana. Then I volunteered on an underwater film in Glacier Bay National Park while working as a **biologist** there.

Those experiences helped me get into graduate school to study **science** and **natural history filmmaking**. I interned as a filmmaking assistant at NOAA and I've been here ever since!

Being able to **write** is important, and **photography**, too, to be a camera operator. One of the easiest things you can do is **watch movies** and take notes. Take any opportunity you can to work in the industry. Get **experience** working with different filmmakers and production companies. That, and the **networking connections** you make, will help you.



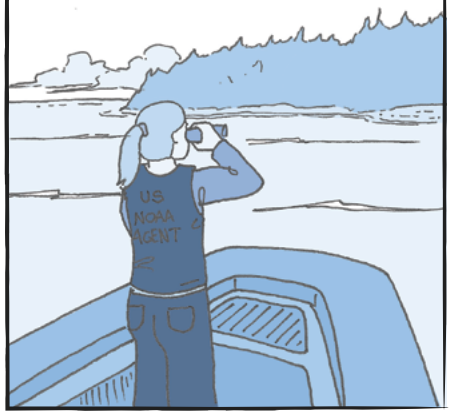
Maile Schneider, special agent

I **investigate violations** of marine conservation **laws**, including the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act.

It's incredibly important to **protect** our marine resources. Punishing law-breakers helps prevent future damage, and fines help us **right wrongs**.

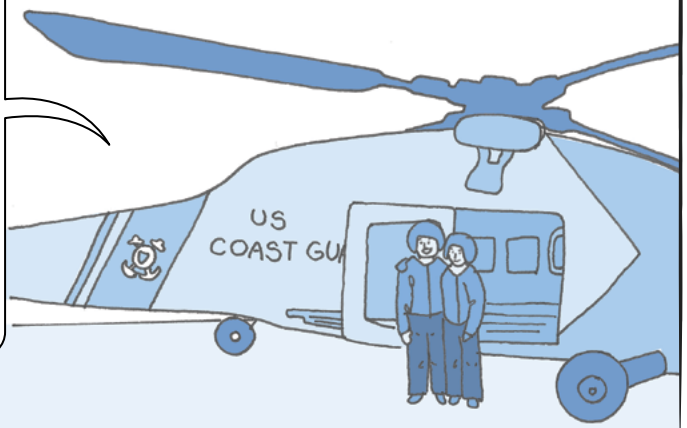
I follow up on **leads** that I uncover or that a concerned citizen sends me. I contact witnesses and suspects, investigate incidents, and write reports about my findings in order to put together a **case**.

I also **patrol** areas of Puget Sound and do **education** and **outreach** events in increase public knowledge of federal rules and regulations.



I like that a lot of my job is **outdoors**. It's fun to interact with new people.

Sometimes my work requires me to work **long hours**, but I know it's necessary to get the job done.



To do this job, you need to study both **marine science** and **criminal justice**.

I became interested in **environmental protection** when I took an environmental science class in high school. While working on my bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Policy, I started as an **intern** at NOAA Fisheries' Office of Law Enforcement. I did that for three years.

It helps if you're outgoing, inquisitive, organized, and able to take criticism. I spend a lot of time on **boats**, so being able to swim and handle sea-sickness is a plus!

I'd suggest getting an **internship** with a resource protection agency like NOAA or the Department of Fish and Wildlife - or work as a **fisheries observer** for a little while to get experience with the fishing industry.

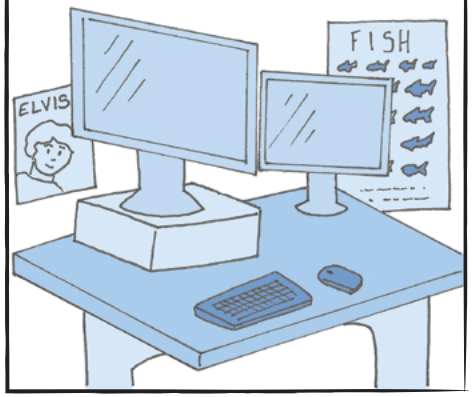
Being able to **write** and **speak well** is important, too. One of the most useful classes I've taken was on writing for environmental studies because I learned how to write good reports. I use the skills I learned in that class all the time.

Jason Cope, fisheries biologist

I study populations of fish. I love the **creativity** my job requires - asking new questions and finding new ways to answer them.

My research helps make **important decisions** about fishing that impact a lot of people. It's a big responsibility.

I spend most of my time in my office, **writing code** for my computer models, **reading** the latest research, and going to **meetings**.



During the summer, I spend some time on **research ships**, measuring and dissecting fish to get **data** for my computer models.

My work includes **coding, math, biology, working with people,** and seeing **many sides** of an issue. I love **traveling** and talking to scientists, fishermen, and people all over the world.

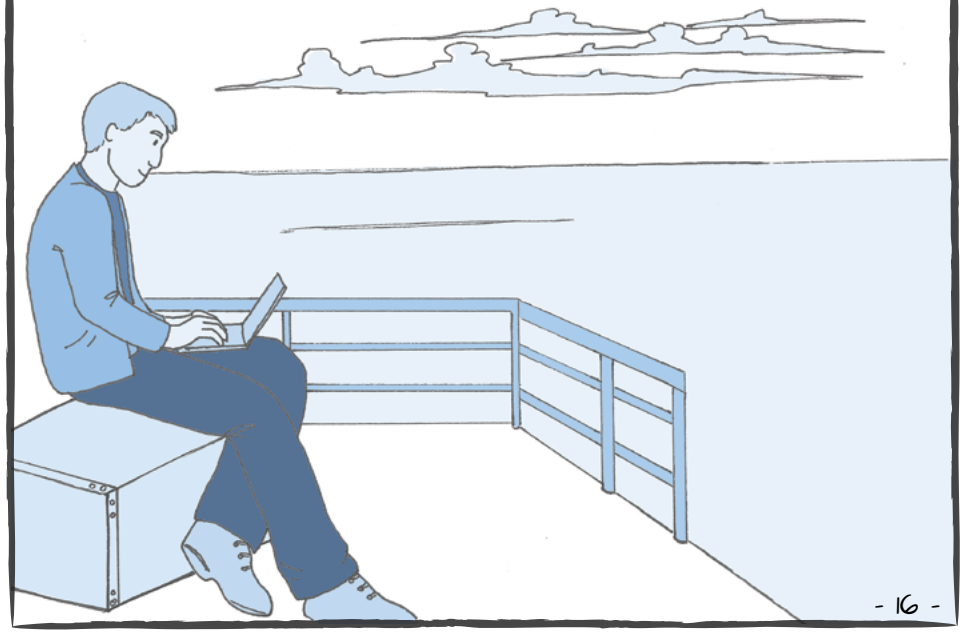
I started at NOAA after finishing a PhD in 2008. I got a BA in **Integrative Biology**, then studied population **modeling, genetics**, and fish.

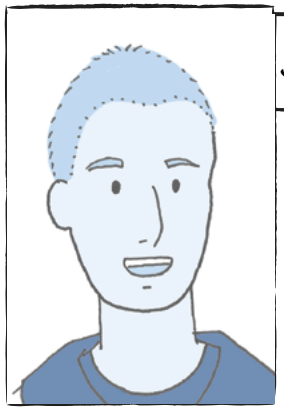
Statistics are very important (and pretty **fun!**). Take statistics as soon as you can and get comfortable with **calculus**. Being able to write computational computer **code** is essential for my job, especially the computer language "R."

My job isn't just **numbers**, though. Being able to **communicate** is just as important! Take a scientific writing course if possible.

Being willing to **learn new things** and work with others is critical. You can't do it all alone, and if you can't **work with others**, you won't have fun. Being **curious** and **adventurous** is a plus, too.

You don't have to go **out to sea** if you don't want to, but it's half the fun!





Justin Keesee, NOAA Corps officer

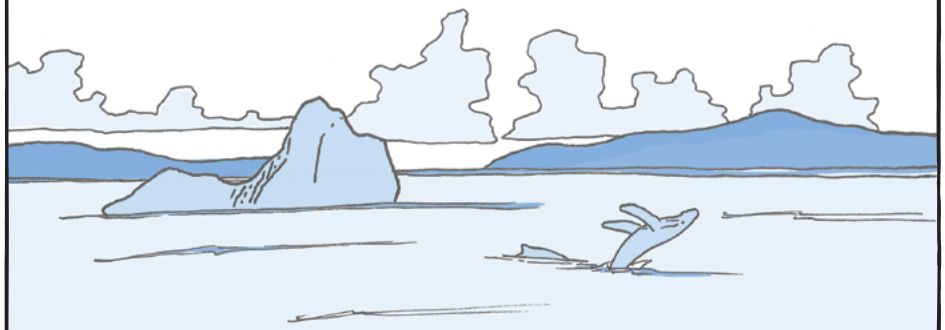
I'm a Lieutenant in the NOAA Corps, which is a uniformed service, like the navy. Our mission is to **support NOAA's work** by being **leaders** and operating NOAA's **boats** and **planes**.

We make it possible for NOAA scientists to get their research done. Basically I'm a ship's captain, a diver, and I get scientists where they need to be to do what they need to do.

Corps officers rotate 2 years at **sea** and 3 years on **land**. Right now I manage NOAA's diving center. I train divers and handle administrative work.

At sea, I'm responsible for ship **navigation** and **safety**. I also dive to make sure the boat is in good shape underwater and untangle the propeller if it gets stuck.

The best thing about my job is seeing and doing **amazing things**. Every morning at sea I wake up to a beautiful ocean or coastline. I get to see science in action and sometimes go **diving** in amazing places.



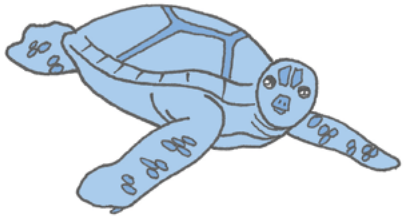
To become a Corps officer, you need a bachelor's degree in **science** or **math**. I use my background in marine biology to understand what the scientists are doing and to better position my ship's resources to **support** them.

In the Corps, you'll go through the Coast Guard's academy. You can choose between **boats and planes**, and they'll also try to match your background with fisheries, ocean research, or hydrography. Plane pilots might hunt hurricanes or do aerial surveys of ice or marine mammals.

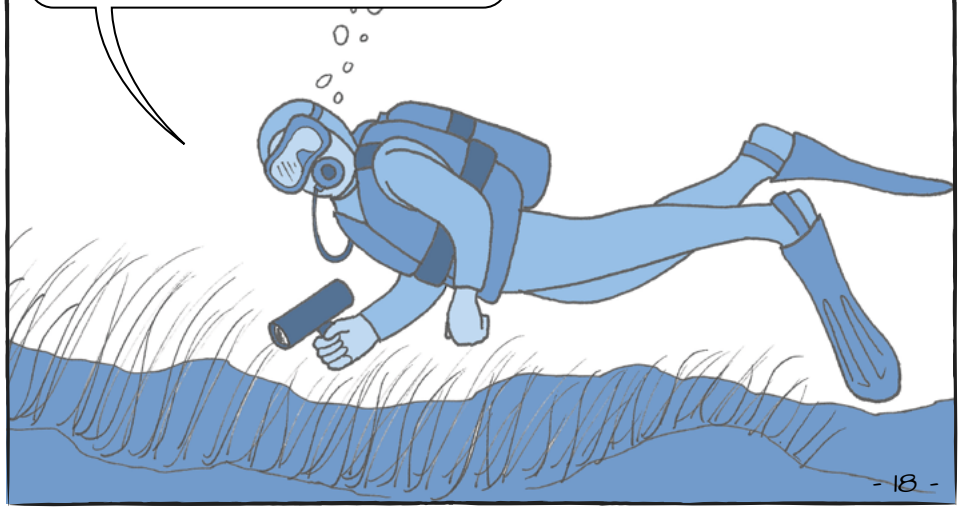
Because we're commissioned officers, we get the **benefits** of military service. But we could be called upon to help fight for our country if the need arose, and sometimes move **across the country** for new assignments.

You can apply to the Corps right after college, but I'd say get some **experience** first.

You may spend **250 days a year** at sea - that's a lot of time away. Being a NOAA fisheries observer for several years before joining the Corps prepared me for that.



Leadership is a big part of the Corps, and it's an ongoing skill that you develop. Learn to lead yourself - show that you can see a task through and **do it well**, even if it's just cleaning up a lab space.



Kristin Wilkinson, stranding specialist

I oversee the West Coast Marine Mammal Stranding Network.

We respond to stranded **whales, dolphins, porpoises, seals, and sea lions** in Washington and Oregon. We use the data we collect to **protect marine mammals** and learn about their health.

From my office, I spend a lot of time **talking** to my network and getting ready for our next project.

At least once a week, I'm in the field doing observations, responding to stranded animals, **releasing rescued animals**, or teaching people about marine mammals.

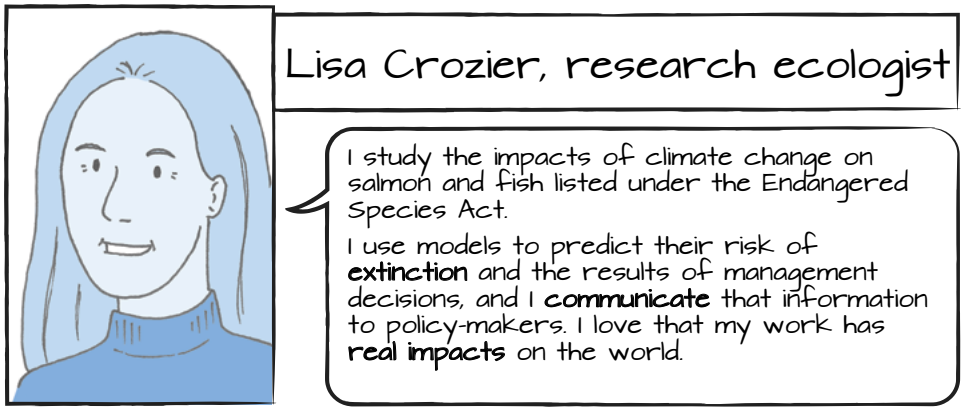
The best part of my job is working with people and organizations that all share a **passion** for marine mammals and **making a difference**.

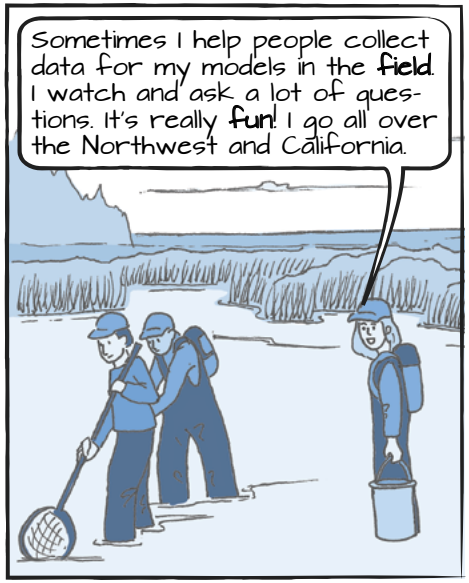
I have a bachelor's degree in **conservation of marine ecosystems** with minors in **marine mammal education** and **zoology**.

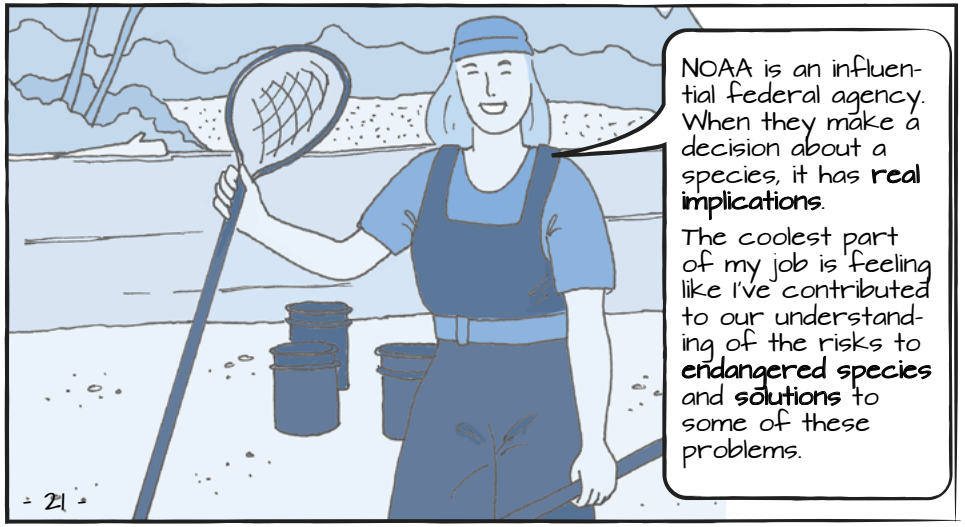
I started working at NOAA after working at the Port Townsend Marine Science Center through **AmeriCorps**, where I coordinated the East Jefferson County Marine Mammal Stranding Network. I recommend getting experience through **volunteering** or **interning**.

I would recommend volunteering with your local **stranding network** if possible, and take as many **biology classes** as you can. Look for volunteer and internship opportunities related to biology.

To work with the public, you need patience and **good communication skills**. To work for a stranding network, you'll need **sea legs** and the ability to be around **dead** animals. We can learn **important** information from animals that died.







I got a BA in **Philosophy** and didn't take any science classes. I hadn't thought about what kind of career I wanted until after I graduated. I wanted to **make a difference** and work on problems that I found compelling - which for me was **conservation**.

I need to ask questions I think are important, otherwise I wouldn't be willing to spend 40 hours a week pursuing this. I also love that I work **independently**, surrounded by **amazing, creative** people.

I went **back to school** to study science, and got a PhD in zoology (ecology and evolution). Then I got a post doc* position at the University of Chicago, and another at NOAA. I've been here ever since.

Because of my liberal arts background, I have a **different perspective** on fisheries, which is helpful. Don't feel held back if you lack a particular skill - you can **learn** it.

It helps to have good quantitative skills, especially **math**. I also do coding, running models, and describe the outcome - so being able to **write** is important. I use the computer languages "R" and winBUGS.

Diversify! Do internships, meet people, and really **think** about what's compelling to you.

I don't work closely with animals on a daily basis anymore. I **miss** that, and I might do more of it in the future.

* "Post doctoral" positions are temporary, mentored research and academic training positions you might get after earning a PhD.

Christine Froschl, fisheries observer

I work as a **biologist** on commercial fishing vessels, where I study the fish brought on board. The data I gather helps keep track of the overall fish population - and **endangered species**. I help make sure that we'll have plenty of fish for many years to come.

I work whenever the fishermen work - and they work 24/7! It's a **hard** but **important** job.

When fish are hauled on board, I'm on deck collecting samples. I record the **number** and **weight** of different species caught.

I'm at sea for 2 to 3 **months** at a time. You live and work on the boat, which can be mentally and physically exhausting.

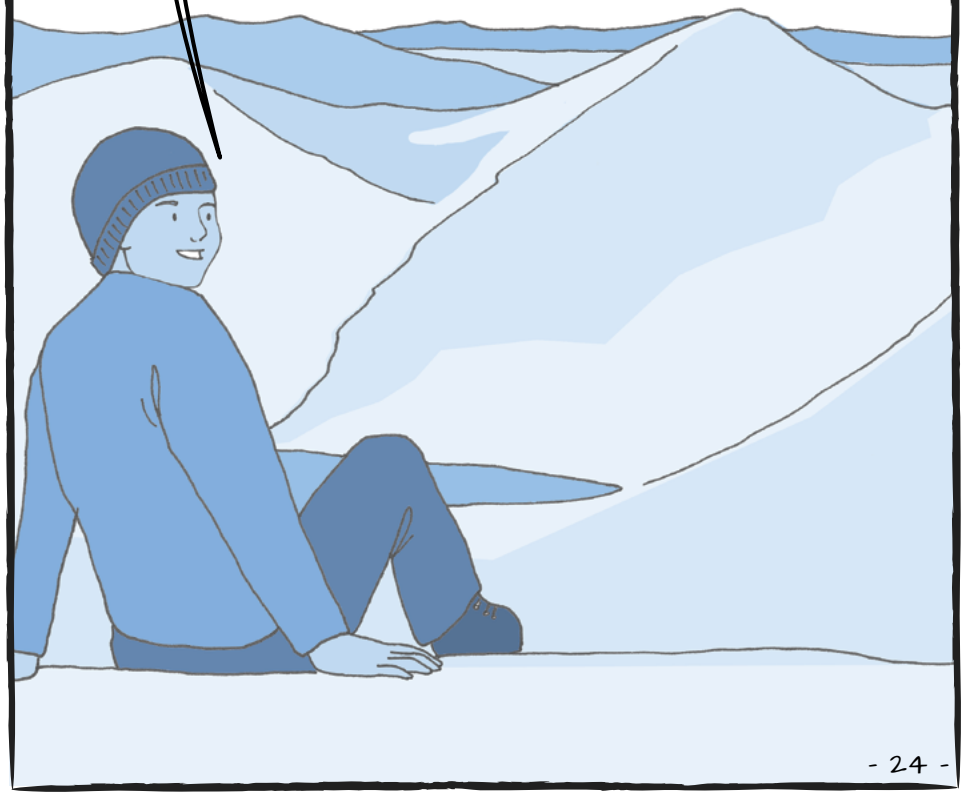
The best part of this job is meeting and working with **people**. On the ship, you rely on the people around you. I've made a lot of **friends** and I enjoy hearing their stories.

To be a fisheries observer, you'll need a bachelor's degree in **biology**. I have a BS in ecology and evolutionary biology.

A good mental **attitude**, **observational skills**, and **patience** are important, too. In this job, your routines will change or be interrupted!

Deciding to work out at sea is a decision that needs a lot of **thought**. It can be **dangerous**, and you should ask yourself if you're willing to be away from **home** for months at a time.

On the other hand, you don't have to be an observer for your whole career! It's a great **stepping stone** to other NOAA jobs like marine biologist, fisheries research scientist, and NOAA Corps.

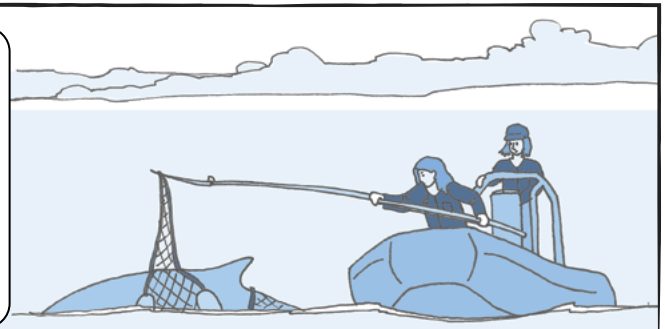


Lynne Barre, marine biologist

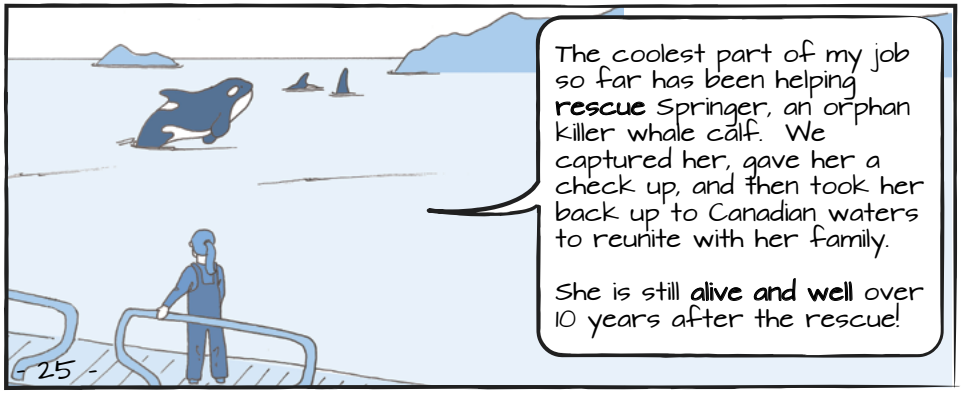
I **protect** all marine mammals - like whales, dolphins, and seals - in Oregon and Washington. I also manage programs that help fish and protect **habitats**.

People are always eager to learn about marine mammals. Doing **outreach** and education is one of my favorite parts of my job. And sometimes I **rescue whales**!

My job includes everything from **untangling whales** from fishing nets, **teaching** people that seal pups are best left alone, and **keeping track** of injured or dead animals...



...to **meeting** with scientists, government agencies, aquariums, environmental groups, and concerned citizens. **Together**, we coordinate the **protection** of different species and make sure our decisions are based on the **best science** available.



The coolest part of my job so far has been helping **rescue** Springer, an orphan killer whale calf. We captured her, gave her a check up, and then took her back up to Canadian waters to reunite with her family.

She is still **alive and well** over 10 years after the rescue!

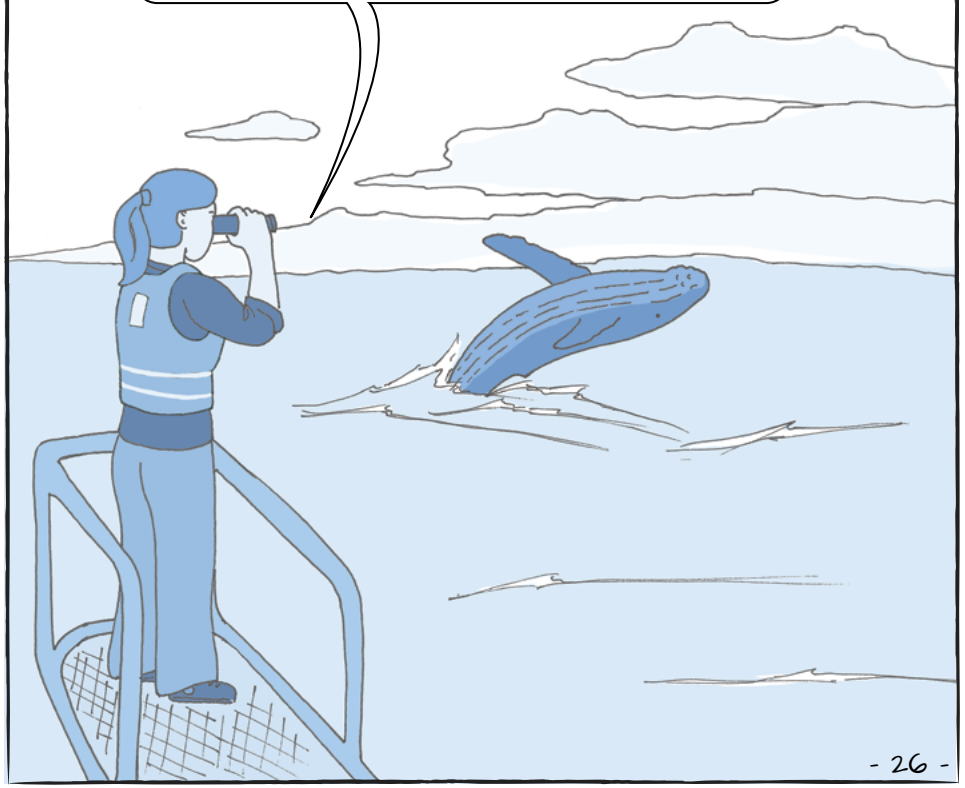
I started studying marine mammals in high school, spending a summer studying humpback whales. I got a BS in biology and a Master's in animal behavior. After that I spent almost three years working on **research projects** with dolphins, sea turtles, and tiger sharks in Australia.

In Australia, I met a team from National Geographic and began working on their "Crittercam" project attaching underwater video cameras to various marine animals (seals, whales, sharks, and sea turtles) to learn about their behavior underwater.

When I got back to the US, I started working for NOAA.

Early on in my career I went to a marine mammal **conference**. It was a great place to hear about the most recent research and **meet people** studying marine mammals.

I was able to talk to students, professors, and researchers. Just asking people how they got started gave me ideas about the different directions my **career** could take.



Mike McCully, systems security

I'm a systems security officer. I **monitor** NOAA's security systems and look for vulnerabilities - and find ways to **fix** them. I love that my job combines **serving my country** and **working with computers**.

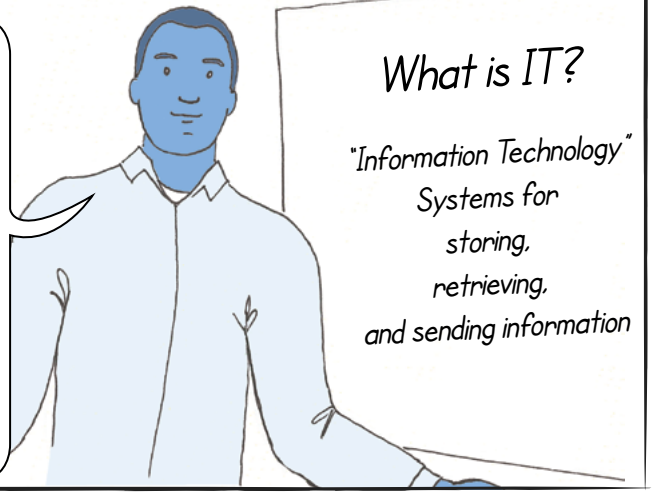
My job is to protect government data and resources. I'm in charge of cyber and computer security as well as **physical security**, like video cameras and badges.

I spend a lot of time **reading** up on the latest technology news, exploits, and cyber attacks. I also **practice** attacks and defense using my test systems.

I work with our tech people, policy-makers, and scientists to close security holes. That can mean **programming** a patch or **teaching people** about passwords.

I travel around the west coast to 16 NOAA sites. I conduct security audits and **run workshops** for employees.

I'm a big believer in **education**, so I answer everyone's computer questions!



What is IT?

"Information Technology"
Systems for
storing,
retrieving,
and sending information

I started learning about computers when I was 10. You can **teach yourself** how to **fix computers**. Play around with them. Build things. Join a tinkering or coding club.

Right after high school, I started working as a **computer technician** for a school district. I got **certifications** from Microsoft and Cisco and, a couple years later, took one class at a time to get my bachelor's degree.

I have a BS in organizational leadership, but you can start with **basic certifications** like the **CompTIA A+**. Then, you can branch out depending on what you're interested in. You could go on to a degree in **computer science** or **engineering**.

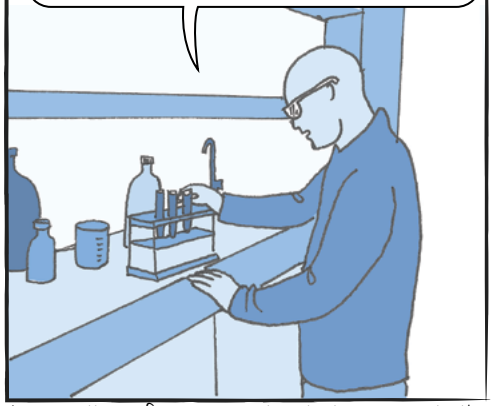
To be an IT security officer, you need **real-world skills** in many areas - **security cameras**, **locks**, **software**, and **application development**, plus your regular IT help desk knowledge. The best thing you can do is get experience. I've done just about every job in IT over 15 years, plus 10 years of playing with computers as a kid. The longer you're around this stuff, the better you're going to get at it.

Denis da Silva, research chemist

I study **toxic chemicals** in marine organisms. These can be chemicals that we now know are toxic (like in plastic) or natural chemicals, like all the human hormones that end up in our waste water.

I find pollutants that we didn't know were out there and come up with methods to measure them in fish and marine mammals. It's the **early warning** that something is wrong.

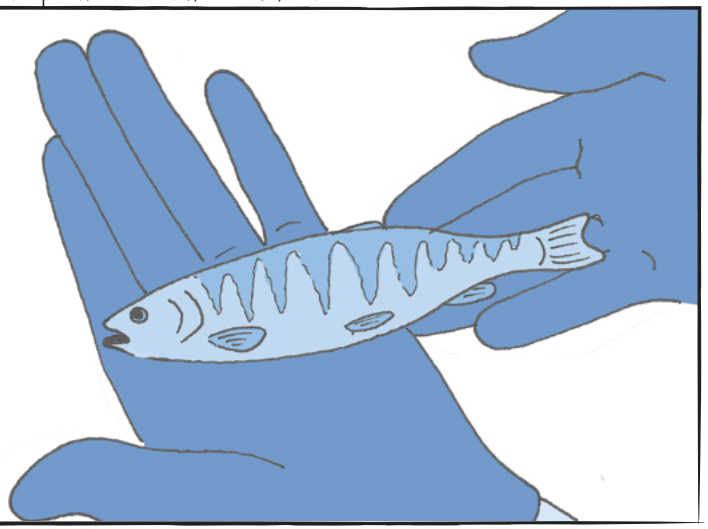
I spend a lot of time finding ways to **solve problems** like how to measure pollutants or fish hormones for aquaculture*, then applying the answers to samples.



Then I sit in my office and **write reports** or **crunch numbers** to see what tests I need to do next.

* aquaculture: farming aquatic plants or animals, like fish, for food

My research helps **identify problems** with contaminants. Fish don't need **anti-depressants** or **caffeine**, but they're swimming in medications and other chemicals that we **flush away**.



When I was younger, I didn't know what I wanted to do. Like most kids in Brazil, I wanted to play soccer. But I always liked **chemistry**.

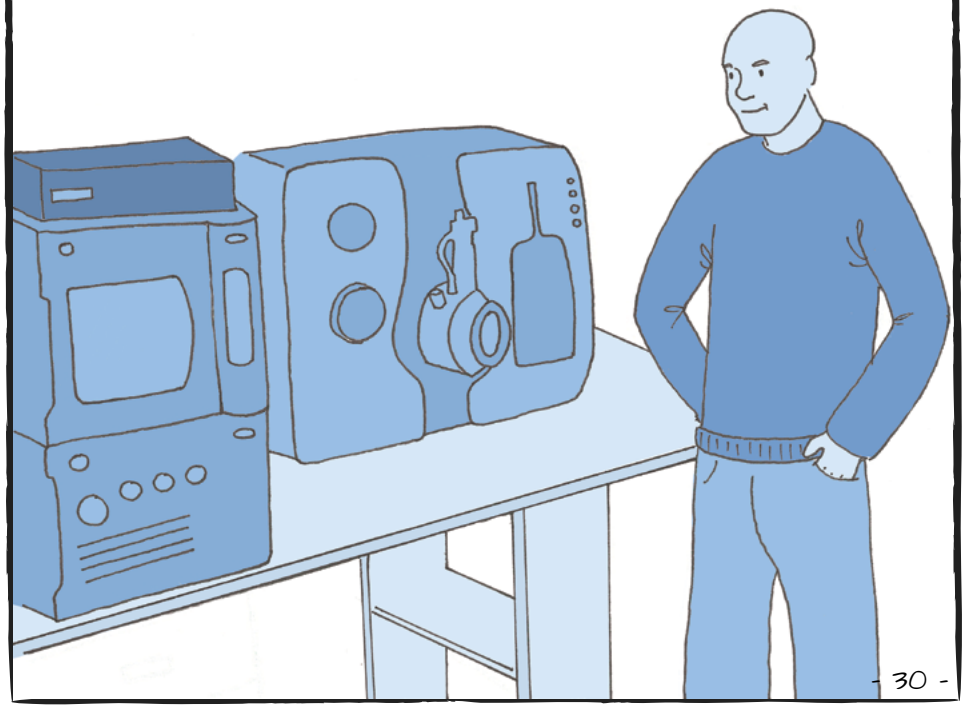
I got a BS in chemistry and found out about environmental chemistry. I wanted to work on **pollution problems**, so I got a PhD in chemical oceanography, then a post doc* at NOAA, and I've been here ever since!

I love **solving problems**. The answers to my work don't exist until I come up with them! You've got to be **curious** and study a lot. You can't give up or say, "this isn't going to work."

Studying **chemistry, oceanography,** and **environmental science** in high school or college will help you get into this field.

You can get experience by **interning** - we always need extra help doing chemistry lab work. You won't see fish, it's all **graphs and numbers** - but there's a good story behind them!

* "Post doctoral" positions are temporary, mentored research and academic training positions you might get after earning a PhD.



Nat Scholz, ecotoxicologist

I lead a **team** of 25-30 researchers. We work on **reducing pollution** and its impacts on many different species, from orcas and salmon to small fish at the base of food chains.

Our job is to do science to understand what threats pollution poses around the US and the world - and to tell people about it.

I oversee my team's research on everything from **oil spills** and **hurricanes** to **stormwater runoff**. I do a lot of writing and thinking about how to do our research. I also need to make sure that our science is very thorough and **accurate** because it will impact peoples' **jobs** and **health**.

Our work on stormwater runoff (which carries toxic chemicals from roads into streams and oceans) includes everything from **chasing storms** to **talking** to governments, teachers, and citizens.

We're studying how to make rain gardens that filter out pollution, and are affordable and practical to build.

Problems like oil spills and hurricanes take us **around the world**. We've been from the Gulf of Mexico and San Francisco Bay to Panama and Australia, studying the effects of spilled crude oil on the embryos of fish like tuna and mahi mahi.

My job is part **public health**, part **conservation biology**. It's different every day, and that's pretty cool.

I wanted to be a **marine biologist** ever since I was a kid. I got a bachelor's and master's degree in the marine biological laboratory at Woods Hole, and a PhD in **zoology**. I started as a **postdoctoral researcher**, then got hired at NOAA. I started out leading a group of 5 or 6 researchers, then moved up to become **program manager**.

There are **many paths** to my position. My team includes fisheries biologists, chemists, **toxicologists**, **engineers**, **oceanographers**, **physiologists**, **developmental biologists**, and we have an MD/PhD who specializes in **pediatric genetics** and **molecular biology**.

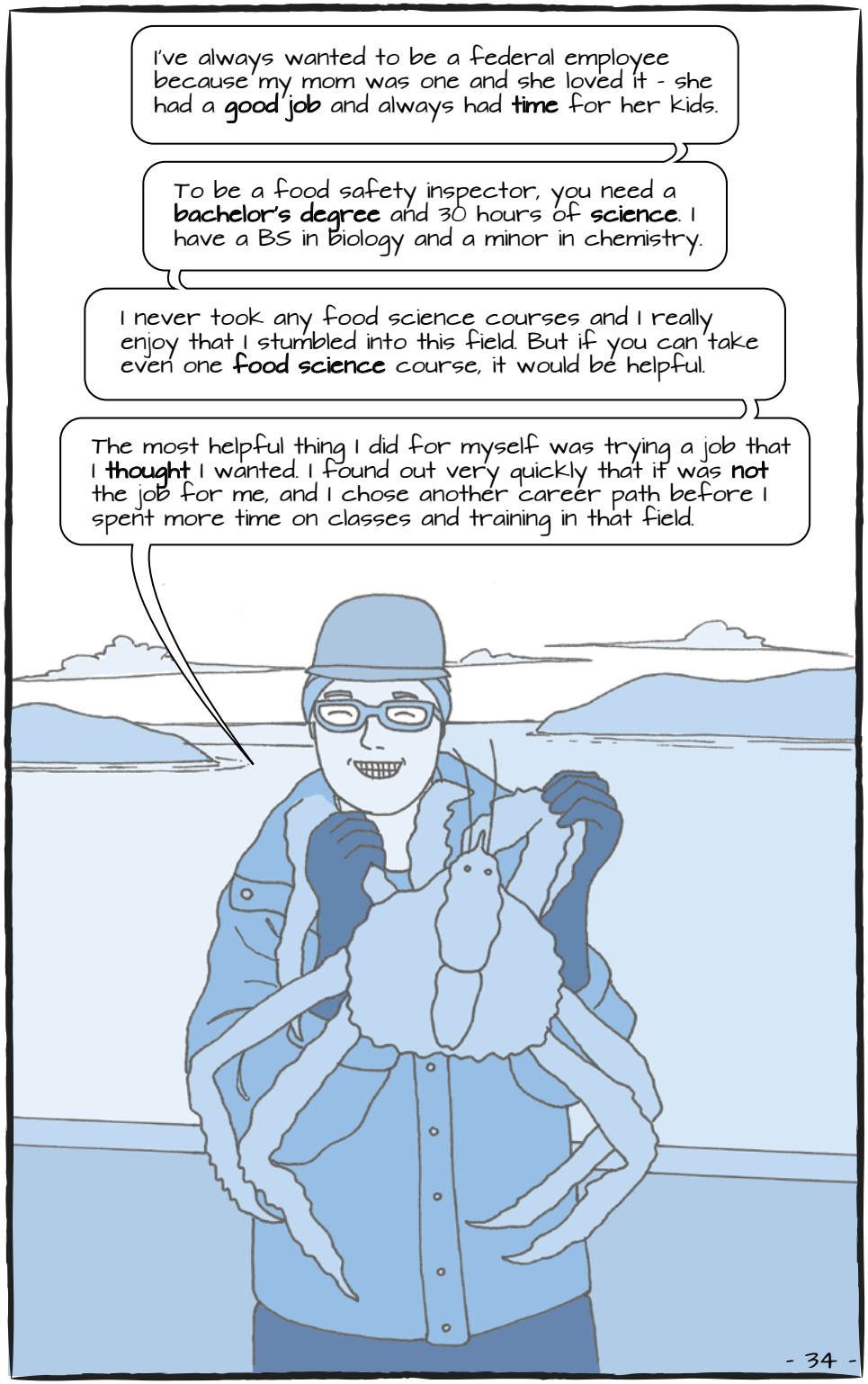
It takes all of us **working together** with those different perspectives to get the job done.

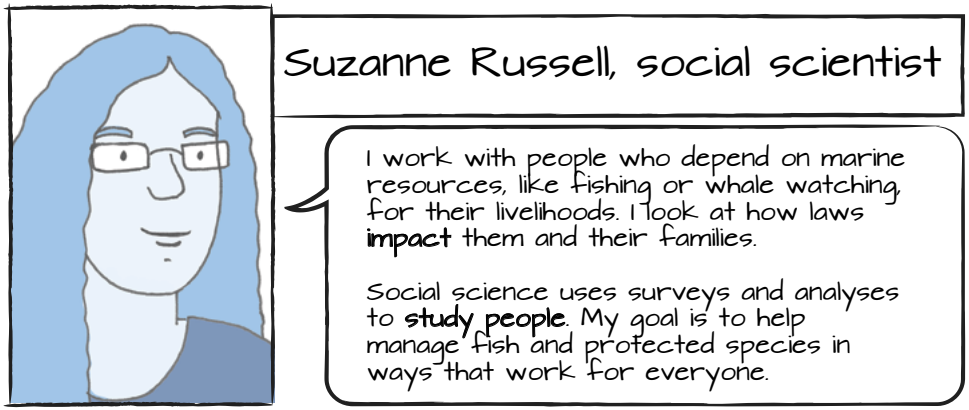
Look for experiences that are **diverse**.

Many subjects are important to this kind of work, not just science - **history**, how **law** becomes **policy**, **creative writing** and **visual arts**.

Having that **cross-disciplinary skillset** is necessary to succeed, and not everyone has that.


Whitney Moore, seafood inspector
I'm a seafood safety inspector. I **investigate** and collect data to **protect** anyone who buys or eats seafood.
I really enjoy working with people and I love that I get to work with the public in a way that **promotes health** and safe business practices.
I plan **inspections**, conduct **investigation**, take **samples**, and **collect data** to make sure that our seafood is safe and properly labeled.
I spend about half my time in my **office** working on reports and about half my time going to seafood processing facilities to **inspect** and take samples.
Sometimes I **travel** to give presentations, take training courses, or audit fishing vessels and shore-based processing plants.


I've always wanted to be a federal employee because my mom was one and she loved it - she had a **good job** and always had **time** for her kids.
To be a food safety inspector, you need a **bachelor's degree** and 30 hours of **science**. I have a BS in biology and a minor in chemistry.
I never took any food science courses and I really enjoy that I stumbled into this field. But if you can take even one **food science** course, it would be helpful.
The most helpful thing I did for myself was trying a job that I **thought** I wanted. I found out very quickly that it was **not** the job for me, and I chose another career path before I spent more time on classes and training in that field.



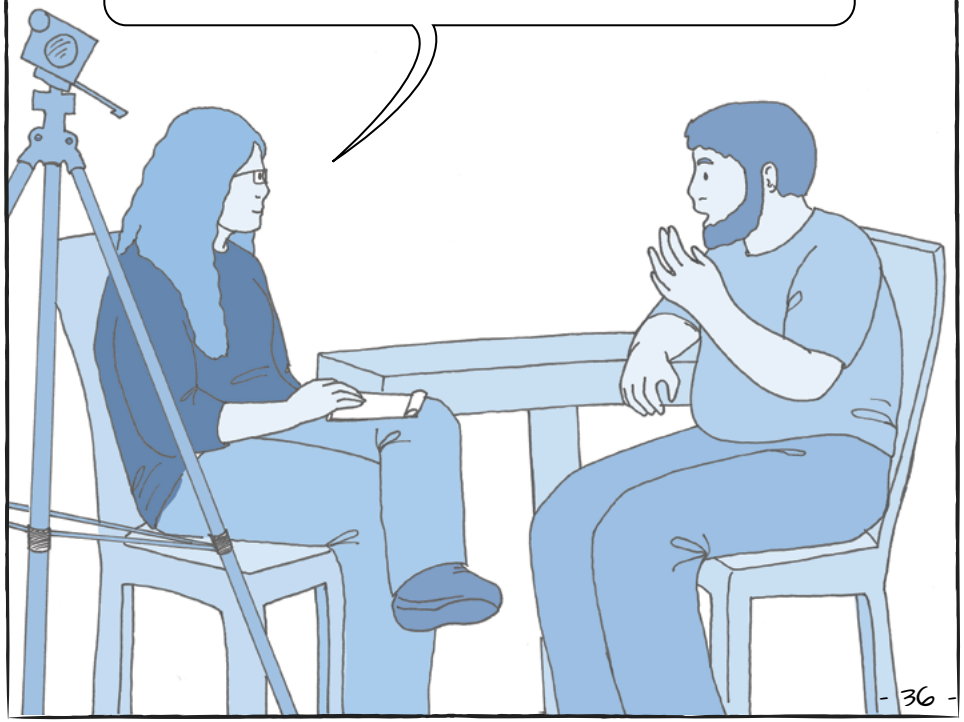
My career path is **unconventional**. After graduating with a bachelor's degree marine biology (and minors in chemistry and oceanography), I **sailed** all over the world as a **NOAA Corps officer** for about 6 years.

Then I switched to doing administration for NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center. After many years, I went **back to school** for a master's degree in marine affairs with an emphasis on anthropology and a certificate in conservation biology. I knew I wanted to do **science**, and I discovered this job during grad school.

To be a social scientist, you need to be **curious**. You have to want to learn from people, and be able to listen - and have fun!

Some **math and statistics** are good, but that's true for any science. Learn how to **interview** people. Learn about **history** and **culture**. Anthropology or sociology classes will teach you about **ethics** and **perception**.

This is a very broad field. You could study psychology, sociology, archaeology, or cultural, environmental, or marine anthropology. Get **experience**! Volunteer or intern with a lab or a museum.



What about money?

Working for NOAA has many **benefits**!

Different jobs get paid different amounts, based on what you do, where you work, and how long you've been working. The **average** annual federal salary is about **$79,000**.

Other benefits include health **insurance**, retirement plans, and paid **vacation** and sick leave - plus job stability, jobs in all 50 states (check out www.legislative.noaa.gov/NIYS/). You also get the chance to **serve** your country and make a **difference**.

You can look up **pay ranges** online (on the Ocean Careers website, click on an area to view careers and salaries in that field):

www.oceancareers.com/2.0/statements.php

www.payscale.com/research/US/Employer=National_Oceanic_and_Atmospheric_Administration/Salary

How to get a job at NOAA

Graduate from high school! Get **help** if you need it. Check out www.readysetgrad.org

Brush up your **writing** skills! Almost every job requires some writing - and the better yours is, the better suited you will be for a wide variety of jobs.

Try it out! Volunteer, do an internship, or take a temporary position to get **real world experience** and see what kinds of work you like to do (or what you don't like). A good internship experience will let you meet people, learn skills, and gain experience.

Investigate NOAA opportunities for students at: www.education.noaa.gov/Special_Topics/Student_Opportunities.php#page=page-1

Keep an **open mind**! You just might stumble upon something you really love.

Think about getting a **college degree**! Most NOAA employees have a Bachelor's degree and many have a Master's degree or a PhD.

Feeling lost? Need more help?

If you feel like there are too many **possibilities**, or too few, try some of these personality tests and skills inventories.

These **tools** can help you think about what you'd like to do - but remember, these are just guides! **Exploring** different careers and profiles will give you a better idea of what speaks to you and what doesn't. Most career guides **categorize** careers - but a lot of careers **cross those boundaries**. Don't feel boxed in by a category or personality quiz.

The best way to know if you'll like something is to find a way to try it. **Just ask!** If someone says no, ask three other people.

Skills Inventories and Personality Tests

My Career Story workbook: www.vocopher.com/CSI/CCI_workbook.pdf

Skills inventory: http://www.iseek.org/careers/skillsAssessment

Where are you going? career guide and skills inventory: www.wtb.wa.gov/Documents/CareerGuideweb.pdf

Explore Science Careers

www.pathwaystoscience.org

www.ionfuture.org

Want a marine science career?

Explore **marine science careers** and find out **how to get them**:

An Ocean of Possiblities: www.nosb.org/opportunities/career-resources/

Marine Careers.net : www.marinecareers.net

NOAA "Ocean AGE" career profiles: www.oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/edu/oceanage/welcome.html

OceanCareers.com: www.oceancareers.com/2.0/index.php

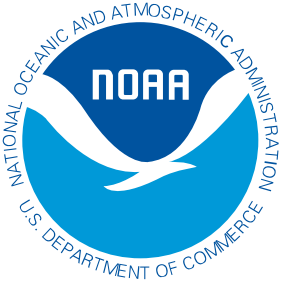
Are you interested in science, protecting the environment, or serving your country?

Think about working for NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration!

Explore different jobs at NOAA Fisheries with this "choose your own path" book. Every job at NOAA helps fulfill NOAA's mission of "science, service, and stewardship"- working to understand and manage our oceans and atmosphere for people and the planet.

Learn more about the different kinds of research and work at NOAA Fisheries and NOAA at:

www.fisheries.noaa.gov
www.NOAA.gov



Illustrated by Winifred Kehl